

Festiniog Urban District Council

REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 1944

BY

J. W. MORRIS

L.R.C.P. & S. (Ed.) L.R.F.P.S. (Glas.)

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Shrewsbury :

W. B. Walker, Printer, High Street

To the Festiniog Urban District Council

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting the following report for the year ending December, 1944.

I have to express my appreciation of the excellent work done by J. J. Davies, Esq., the Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Davies has since left the district, and Mr. Ernest Jones was appointed as Sanitary Inspector. Mr. Jones holds the following Certificates :—

- 1.—The Sanitary Inspector's Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors' Examination Joint Board.
- 2.—The Meat and Other Foods Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.
- 3.—Diploma of the Institute of Public Health and Hygiene.

I have the honour to remain,

Your obedient Servant,

J. W. MORRIS.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	16,323
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	7,170
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1944) according to Rate Books	2,410
Rateable Value	£25,039
Net sum represented by a penny rate, 1943—44 ..	£88/4/8

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The chief industries of the district are Slate and Granite Quarrying, which is extremely strenuous work.

A large percentage of Quarrymen work underground, some down to 700 feet, and the rest work in Mills on the surface, where there is a great deal of dust created from sawing and dressing the slate.

Slate Quarrying in the district is responsible for the prevalence of Pulmonary diseases and Rheumatism.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1944.

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	15.89
Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List) :—	
Puerperal Sepsis Nil Rate per 1,000 total	
Other puerperal causes .. Nil (live and still) ..	Nil
Total Nil	
Total Tuberculosis death-rate	1.53
Total Phthisis death-rate	1.53
Cancer death-rate	2.37
Birth-rate	15.76
Scarlet Fever death-rate	Nil
Whooping Cough	Nil
Diphtheria	Nil
Maternal Mortality rate	8.85
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	16
Death from Measles (all ages)	Nil
Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	Nil

Live Birth Rate for England and Wales, 1944 ..	17.6
Death Rate for England and Wales	11.6

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Public Health Officers of the Authority.

Medical.—One part-time Medical Officer of Health

Sanitary Inspector.—Ernest Jones

Holds—

1.—The Sanitary Inspectors' Certificate of The Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors' Examination Joint Board.

2.—The Meat and other Foods Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.

3.—Diploma of the Institute of Public Health and Hygiene.

Mr. Davies left the district in August, 1944.

Laboratory Facilities.

The Examination of Swabs from all suspected cases of Diphtheria is carried out by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service, Conway, under the Medical Research Council.

Ambulance Facilities.

(a) *Infectious Cases.*—There is no Isolation Hospital in the County at present. Cases are sent to Caernarvon Fever Hospital.

(b) *Non-Infectious and Accident Cases.*—A Motor Ambulance Car is available at the Memorial Hospital.

(c) *Maternity Patients.*—Conveyed in the Hospital Motor Ambulance when necessary.

Nursing in the Home.

The Festiniog Nursing Association employs Three State registered Nurses who are also qualified Midwives. One of these Nurses is in charge of Festiniog Village.

No Nurse available for Infectious diseases.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

The Child Welfare Centre is held fortnightly at the Garregddu Chapel Vestry (in the centre of the town) at 2 p.m. The accommodation is all that could be desired.

Ante-Natal and Post-Natal Cases.

The County Medical Officer of Health has arranged a series of these Clinics which are held periodically by Mr. J. Gardiner Wigley, F.R.C.S., Chester.

Orthopaedic Clinics.

Held fortnightly at the Women's Institute. The clinic is visited regularly by the Orthopaedic Surgeon.

School Clinics.

The County Medical Officer of Health arranges these clinics, and I should like to express my appreciation of the thorough and efficient manner in which this work is carried out

Tuberculosis Clinics.

This work is carried out under the auspices of the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association.

The County Tuberculosis Physician attends the Clinic at Wynne Road, on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month, also on the 2nd and 4th Fridays at 11 a.m.

The Clinic has an excellent X-Ray plant and is valuable for ALL CHEST conditions whether tubercle or not.

I desire to express my appreciation of the excellent work done by Dr. Jackson and Dr. Clarke at the Memorial Clinics.

Treatment Centres of Venereal Diseases.

This Centre is held at the C. & A. Infirmary, Bangor, on Thursdays 2—5 p.m. for Male Patients, and Fridays, 2—5 p.m. for Female Patients.

The centre is under the control of the County Council, and the County M.O.H. arranges for blood tests (Wassermann Reaction).

Hospitals.

There is one Hospital in the district. The Festiniog and District Memorial Hospital—situated in the centre of the Town, overlooking Cwmbowydd Valley.

It is a Cottage Hospital for general and Medical Cases. It has 19 beds, and is available for persons residing in the following parishes:—Dolwyddelen, Penmachno, Festiniog, Maentwrog, Trawsfynydd, Llanfrothen, Penrhyndeudraeth, Talsarnau, Harlech, Llanfair and Llanbedr.

The Festiniog U.D. Council has a representative on the Committee of Management.

The Hospital is very well equipped for any major operation and possesses an operating Theatre. An X-Ray plant has been installed, with all the latest electro-medical equipment.

The Hospital is doing splendid work.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The whole district, except some farm houses and a few isolated houses is supplied with a constant and sufficient supply of water from the Monwynion Lake.

Bacteriological Examinations of the main water supply have shown it to be satisfactory, being Ministry of Health Classification I.

The Chemical analysis carried out by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Conway, shows that it has a p.h. value 6.0 with no temporary hardness, but slight trace of permanent hardness, it has a marked erosive, and some solvent action on bright lead.

The Analyst's Report states that the water is chemically satisfactory. The watermains are bitumen coated cast iron and galvanised iron, with copper and galvanised iron service pipes to premises.

The Water Supply of the area is satisfactory in quality and sufficient in quantity.

The Monwynion Lake is a mountain lake, the catchment area is free from all dangers of human pollution. The water is mechanically filtered and treated with Sulphate of Alumina and Lime at the Garreglwyd Filter-house.

The results of the various analysis in 1943 were satisfactory. No samples were taken in 1944.

Samples are bacteriologically examined at the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Conway.

The proportion of dwelling houses and proportion of population supplied by public mains direct to houses is 97 per cent. By means of stand pipes and wells 3 per cent.

Sewerage and Drainage.

During the year sewers were maintained and repairs carried out when necessary.

Rivers and Streams.

No special action was taken during the year, apart from cleaning certain parts of the rivers near habitable dwellings when found necessary.

Closet Accommodation.

No pail closets were converted into water closets during the year, owing to shortage of labour and material.

Public Cleansing.

There has been no change in the method of collection and disposal of house refuse in the district during the year. The removal of refuse is carried out weekly in practically the whole of the district, and some parts of Tanygrisiau are done twice weekly. The work is done by direct labour except in the Llan and Manod districts, which are done by contracts.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Total number of formal notices issued	10
Number complied with	8
Total number of informal notices issued	115
Number complied with	104
Total number of New Houses completed—	
(a) by Local Authority	—
(b) by private enterprise	—
Number of plans new Houses, buildings	—
Visits to Bakehouses	28
Number of notices <i>re</i> defects	3
Visits to Cowsheds	105
Number of notices <i>re</i> defects	15
Visits to milk shops	—
Number of notices <i>re</i> defects	—
Visits to Dairies	44
Number of notices <i>re</i> defects	2
Visits to slaughter-houses	168
Number of notices <i>re</i> defects	1
Notices <i>re</i> removal of ashes	10
Notices <i>re</i> removal of manure	—
Notices <i>re</i> defective drains	38
Number of visits to cases of infectious diseases	24
Number of houses disinfected	35
Number of defective water fittings	142
Number of pail closets converted into W.C.	—
Number of new water closets erected	3
Total number of water closets	2427
Pail closets	62
Privies or other closets	136
Number of closets serving more than one house	13
Milk samples taken for Ministry of Health	—
For County Council	—
For Local Sanitary Authority and Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme	449

SHOPS AND OFFICES.

CAMPING SITES.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

SCHOOLS.

The remarks in last year's Report apply to this year also.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year.

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	152
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	206
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above), which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1926	12
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	21
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	7
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	5

2. Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	35
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the Year.

(a) *Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.*

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	None
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after services of formal notice :—	
(a) By Owners	None
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners ..	None

(b) *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

- | | |
|--|------|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied | 42 |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notice :— | |
| (a) By Owners | 18 |
| (b) By Local Authority in default of owner .. | None |

(c) *Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Acts, 1936.*

- | | |
|---|------|
| (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | None |
| (2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | None |

(d) *Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.*

- | | |
|---|------|
| (1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were made | None |
| (2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit | None |

4. Housing Act, 1936—Part IV.—Overcrowding.

- | | |
|--|------|
| (a) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year | 24 |
| (2) Number of families dwelling therein | 26 |
| (3) Number of persons dwelling therein | 156 |
| (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year | None |
| (c) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year | None |
| (2) Number of persons concerned in such cases .. | None |
| (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding | None |
| (e) Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report. | |

Other Housing Remarks.

No Demolition Orders were made during the year. Permission has been granted to the few owners of Houses scheduled for demolition, to let them for duration only, to families approved by the Council. Such houses will be demolished when alternative accommodation is available.

290 houses are required for slum clearance and to abate overcrowding. It has been decided to build 50 to 60 houses in the first year after the cessation of hostilities, the houses will be allocated as follows :—

20 on Glasdo Fields, Festiniog.
14 on Fron Fawr Housing Site.
16 on Glasfryn Fields, Manod.

The sites have been approved by the Town and Country Planning Officer, and by the Welsh Board of Health.

New Buildings.

Seven plans were submitted for approval during the year. These include plans for 3 Garages, 2 Sculleries, 1 new W.C. at Empire Hall, or conversion of shop into house at No. 6, Newbro Street.

Food Inspection.

(a) *Milk Supply.*

Two producers were added to the register during the year, Number on Register at 31st December, 1944 :—

Producers only	..	..	..	28
Retailers	..	..	..	5
Producer-Retailers	..	..		29
				—
				62

The following are licensed to sell “ Tuberculin Tested ” “ Certified ” Milk :—

Messrs. David Lewis & Son, Dorfil Street.
Mr. R. D. Williams, Glyn Dairy, Lord Street.
Mrs. Evans, 1, Wynne Road.
Mr. H. Hughes, Maenofferen Dairy.

(b) *Meat Inspection.*

168 visits were made to the two Slaughter-houses, and 70 visits to Butchers shops.

Meat is supplied from the centres in this district to the population living in the Festiniog Urban area, Maentwrog and Trawsfynydd, Bettws-y-Coed and Pebmachno and Dolwyddelan.

Animals slaughtered during the year :—

Cattle	..	..	..	779
Lambs and Sheep	..	..	..	7352
Calves	..	..	..	542
Total				8676

Meat Condemned.

Cattle	..	..	..	15126 lbs.
Sheep	..	..	..	1240 lbs.
Calves	..	..	..	59 lbs.
Total				16425 lbs.

(c) *Other Foods.*

The following were condemned as unfit for Human consumption :—

Tinned Foods	..	..	..	134 tins.
Fish	..	..	..	46 stones.
Sausages	..	..	..	60 lbs.
Bacon	..	..	..	14½ lbs.
Tea	..	..	..	10½ lbs.
Brawn	..	..	..	6 lbs.
Butter	..	..	..	37 lbs.
Beef	..	..	..	22 lbs.
Peas	..	..	..	4¾ cwt.
Oranges	..	..	..	30 lbs.
Cauliflowers	..	..	..	26 lbs.
Cabbages	..	..	..	147 lbs.
Kippers	..	..	..	112 lbs.
Coffee	..	..	..	87 packets.
Sugar	..	..	..	6½ lbs.
Yorkshire Pudding	..	..	..	13 pkts.
Pea Flour	..	..	..	7 pkts.
Custard Powder	..	..	..	101 pkts.
Food Beverage	..	..	..	6 pkts.

Communal Feeding of School Children.

All the Schools in the Area have their own Communal Feeding Centres. The success of the Centres has been highly satisfactory. This is due largely to the excellent work of the voluntary staff of women workers. I congratulate all concerned as I can testify that these centres have proved of inestimable value to the children. The health and physique of the children have definitely improved as a result of these Centres. The meals provided are excellent both in nutritional value and quantity.

RAINFALL IN 1944 IN MORWYNION LAKE.

Taken at 9 a.m. daily.
Above Ground, 10 feet.

Diameter of funnel, 4 inches.
Above Sea Level, 1320 feet.

MONTH.	Total Depth.	Greatest fall in 24 hours.		No. of Days with	
				.01 ins. or more.	.14 ins. or more.
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.		
January	9.34	1.55	23	25	23
February	2.44	1.05	1	11	9
March	1.45	.45	16	10	8
April	2.54	.58	20	14	13
May	2.93	1.25	26	10	9
June	4.49	1.15	4	22	18
July	6.63	1.85	10	21	18
August	3.93	1.30	28	16	12
September	6.58	.74	24	20	19
October	7.08	1.35	20	20	20
November	6.70	.88	20 & 28	27	23
December	6.42	1.35	11	18	17
Total	60.53			214	189

RAINFALL IN 1944 AT BETHESDA CEMETERY.

Taken at 9 a.m. daily.
Above Ground, 9 feet.

Diameter of funnel, 5 inches.
Above Sea Level, 750 feet.

MONTH.	Total Depth.	Greatest fall in 24 hours.		No. of Days with	
				.01 ins. or more.	.04 ins. or more.
	Inches.	Inches.	Date.		
January	11.61	2.0	23	26	22
February	4.29	1.98	2	11	9
March	1.47	.49	19	12	9
April	3.85	.90	20	14	10
May	3.93	1.22	26	11	9
June	5.96	2.0	3	22	18
July	7.32	1.85	10	18	18
August	5.26	1.78	28	16	16
September	8.87	1.35	4	20	20
October	8.47	1.25	14	20	20
November	9.07	1.17	28	27	24
December	7.03	1.10	22	22	19
Total	77.13			230	199

The above two tables of rainfall was supplied by E. L. Evans, Esq.,
the U.D.C. Engineer and Surveyor.

Average rainfall for 1944—68.8.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1944.

				Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	..	..	..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	20	12	Nil
Diphtheria	..	..	..	2	2	Nil
Enteric Fever (including Para-typhoid)	..	..	..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	..	..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Pneumonia	..	..	..	1	1	1
Other diseases generally notifiable	..	..	..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Measles	..	..	..	8	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	5	Nil	Nil
Erysipelas	..	..	..	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other diseases notifiable locally				Nil	Nil	Nil
Total				36	15	1

Tuberculosis.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1944.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
5—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
15—	2	2	3	1	—	—	—	—
20—	1	6	—	—	2	—	—	—
25—	3	1	—	—	1	1	—	—
35—	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—	7	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
55—	5	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
65 and upwards	3	1	—	—	2	1	—	—
Totals	24	11	4	2	9	2	—	—

The rate of non-notified deaths to total tuberculosis deaths—Nil.

The notification of Tuberculosis is satisfactory in the area.

Cancer.

No special facilities are available for the diagnosis and treatment of Cancer.

8 men and 8 women died of Cancer during the year.

Prevention of Blindness.

No action was taken under Section 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936, for the prevention of blindness or for the treatment of persons suffering from any disease or injury to the eyes.

No action was taken in cases of wilful neglect or refusal to notify.

Fibroid phthisis is prevalent among Quarrymen, and slate dust predisposes the Quarrymen to Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The unhealthy conditions prevailing underground in some of the Quarries renders the men more liable to tuberculosis infection.

Since the Clinic (King Edward VII Memorial Association) was opened a few years ago, it has proved that Silicosis is prevalent among Slate Quarrymen, more especially among underground workers.

Since 1940 the Silicosis Act has been extended to include on its Schedule—Slate Mining—so as to cover all workmen employed underground at the Festiniog Quarries.

GENERAL.

36 cases of Infectious diseases (apart from Tuberculosis) were notified during the year.

One died of Pneumonia during the year.

20 cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year, and no deaths occurred from Scarlet Fever.

Two cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year. No deaths.

Eight cases of Measles were notified during the year, but no deaths occurred from Measles.

Five cases of Whooping Cough were notified during the year. No deaths.

Eight men and 8 women died of Cancer during the year.

The examination of swabs for Diphtheria is being carried out by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, Castle Bank,

Conway. This Laboratory also undertakes the examination of Pathological and Bacteriological specimens, and water analysis. It is doing excellent work.

There is no hospital accommodation for Measles or Whooping Cough in the area.

A supply of Anti-Diphtheria Serum is always kept by the M.O.H. for use of Medical Practitioners in the area.

No primary or re-vaccination were performed by the M.O.H. under the Public Health (Smallpox prevention) Regulations, 1917.

There were no cases of locally contracted Anthrax or Rabies reported.

The Local Authority provide the necessary expenditure for the immunisation of School children against Diphtheria on the recommendation of the M.O.H.

